Soho So Good

JURASSIC in London! MURDERS ON MARS in your ears!

TIM FOLEY
NOV 10, 2025

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I was tidying my study (and before you accuse me of procrastination, it was genuinely a tip, I had to wade through piles of books and dog toys and possibly dogs to get to my desk) when I came across this lil beauty:

SOHO THEATRE
ARTIST
name: Tim Foley
SYC
ID: 146825
exp: Oct2014
Soho Theatre Bar – access until 1am and 10% discount off food and drink with this card.
For reservations please contact 020 7434 9393 or sohotheatrebar@sohotheatre.com
SOHO THEATRE

This was my Soho Young Artists card from my days as a 'young writer', back in, oh God, 2013/14. I'd just moved to London, found a great bar job at the Old Red Lion Theatre Pub, and I knew knew knew that if I was going to make it as a Playwright(TM), I had to get myself into a cool hip writing group. Many said no. Soho Theatre said yes, the NERDS.

I've lots of happy memories of that course. I was still fresh to theatre back then - very conscious I hadn't grown up with it, very aware I didn't know all the classics or the BNOCs - but I was quick to Have Opinions and hungry to Do My Take On [Insert

Popular Play Format Here]. I thought my jokes were funny and my voice was worth hearing. That ability to be both timid and audacious was an awkward one and a useful one, I should try to recapture some of that.

If you were to ask me what I specifically learnt on this course, I don't think I could immeeeeediately tell you. This is no slight on the teachers, obviously some writing rules will have lodged in my unconscious. But what I found more rewarding was the rhythm of a weekly meet; the gang of peers who were thrust into my orbit; the plays I got to see for cheap cheap cheap (yes, including FLEABAG); and the nominal connection to a well-known theatre which, on bad days and late shifts, seriously kept me going. That was the good shit.

It was tough when it ended. Look at that expiry date, Oct 2014. No more discount coffees and beers for me. And there was no real chance for any follow-up. I missed the structure and the creative outlet, and for a time I was glum.

Over the years, I ended up doing a number of these schemes with a number of different venues, and it took me a while to appreciate them for what they were: happy hours, not open bars. I was being forged in an era of theatres who went above and beyond to make their foyers as welcoming and as populated as possible - but, possibly due to the energy they were expending to achieve all that, didn't have much luck widening the stairs to the upper levels. I can't begrudge them that, not really. It's the same story for all these places with limited resources - do you do a little for many, or a lot for a few? At the time, selfishly, shamelessly, I wished for the latter. But I know I wouldn't be writing today if that were the norm.

(And at least I had those starter schemes, you know? Because I'm getting a bit nervous that these 'first rung on the ladder' opportunities are drying up. The fact that most of them are London-based doesn't help. I'm slightly mortified that there's no young company at the Royal Exchange Theatre this year, for instance. I hope it returns with gusto.)

Why am I getting all dewy-eyed about Soho? Wellllll, it's not just the fact I found this plastic madeleine. I may have mentioned it once or twice… but this lil dinosaur play is rocking up there NEXT WEEK:

I cannot pretend that JURASSIC playing at The Actual Soho Theatre isn't making me extremely gooey inside. (Gooey is a good thing.) Better yet, the show itself is a conscious throwback to all the scrappy, incisive, muscular shows that I strongly associate with my time there… so yeah, this is feeling pretty darn fitting.

You should come see the play - it is daft, it is dark, it is dinosaur-y. We're running from **18 to 29 November,** and I will be around in the bar after a lot of the shows. Of course I will. Buy me a pint and I will regale you of Soho of old. Slash twelve years ago. No, that IS old. Oh God.

MURDER ON MARS this week!

And if my prehistoric theatricalia next week wasn't enough - MURDER ON MARS, my radio murder mystery, kicks off this Friday! I stacked about it previously:

Murder On Mars

TIM FOLEY • OCTOBER 31, 2025

Do you like murder mysteries? Do you like science fiction thrillers? Would you like a murder mystery science fiction thriller?

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So tune in on **Friday 14th at 14:15**. I have a feeling the WHOLE mystery will drop on BBC Sounds on the day of the first episode, so feel free to binge. No spoilers though!! Can't wait to find out whodunnit.

BREAKING NEWS - the trailer for MURDER ON MARS is live!

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